

**CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND
2018 LODGING/TOURISM FUND PROPOSAL
COVER SHEET**

Project Name: **Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce Visitor Information Center**

Name of Applicant Organization: **Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce**

Applicant Organization IRS Chapter 501 (c) (3) or 501 (c) (6) status and Tax ID Number:
501 (c) (6). Tax ID Number 91-065339

Date of Incorporation as a Washington State Corporation and UBI Number:
Incorporated in Washington State in 1927 UBI # 603-308-198

Primary Contact: **Rex Oliver**

Mailing Address: **395 Winslow Way E, Bainbridge Island WA, 98110**

Email(s): **roliver@BainbridgeChamber.com**

Day phone: **206-842-3700** Cell phone: **951-532-3001**

Please indicate the type of project(s) described in your proposal:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Project Type
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tourism marketing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marketing and operations of special events and festivals designed to attract tourists
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Supporting the operations of a tourism-related facility owned or operated by a nonprofit organization*
<input type="checkbox"/>	Supporting the operations and/or capital expenditures of a tourism-related facility owned or operated by a municipality or a public facilities district*

*If the proposal requests funds for a tourism-related facility, please indicate the legal owner of that facility **T & C Northeast LLC**

LODGING/TOURISM FUND APPLICATION

Applicant Information

1. The Chamber of Commerce mission is to:

- a. Promote the Community,
- b. Represent the Interest of Business Before Government,
- c. Provide Networking Opportunities and
- d. Create a Strong Local Sustainable Economy.

The Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce dates back to 1927 as an organization dedicated to the betterment of business on the island. The BICC is a 501 (c) (6) not-for-profit organization providing an array of services to its members and the community at large. The Chamber operates the official Visitor Information Centers for the island. The Chamber also works collaboratively with most island organizations to help promote and support their events. The Grand Old Fourth of July, promotion of the Chilly Hilly and other events, and the tourist information kiosk at the ferry terminal all represent the Chamber's successful execution of year-round tourism related marketing efforts and support. The Chamber also maintains a dominant web presence with excellent search engine ranking. The Chamber is constantly updating its online information to keep it current and relevant to visitors who access our website from all over the globe. We are also seeing a significant increase in the number of our web visitors who access us through mobile devices.

This past year the Chamber staff and volunteers greeted and directed over 108,408 walking visitors (as of August 31, 2017) to Island events, destinations and businesses. That represents a 18.5% increase over the previous year. Visitors come from every State in the Union, every province in Canada and over 40 countries around the world. This indicates that our outreach to potential markets needs to be on a global scale. Much of our traffic is derived from tourists who are in Seattle to take cruises. These visitors come in several days ahead of their cruise or stay for several days afterward and are looking for "day trips" or longer to explore the region. Our excellent relationship with the concierges in Seattle, Visit Seattle (formerly the Seattle Convention and Visitors Bureau (SCVB)) visitor information staff and the staff associated with the cruise terminals has generated much of the visitor traffic that comes to the island. Our survey shows that 15.8 % of visitors were referred to us by Seattle hotel concierges.

2. Project Partners.

The Chamber is proud to have many partnerships with organizations on the island. The Bainbridge Island Downtown Association, the Rotary Club of Bainbridge Island, the Bainbridge Island Lodging Association and the Bainbridge Island Arts and Humanities Council are some of the largest groups. The Chamber actively distributes brochures from each of these groups to the many visitors to the island. The Chamber is also pleased to partner with other organizations on the island such as Bloedel Reserve, Friends of the Farms, KiDiMu, The Bainbridge Island Historical Museum, The Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, the Japanese American Exclusion Memorial, Squeaky Wheels, the Winery Alliance, the North Kitsap Tourism Consortium and many more.

3. Lodging Tax (Civic Improvement) Fund within the last five years (2013-2017).

2013 Bainbridge Island Visitor Information Center:	funded amount	\$10,000
2013 Weekend Bus Service:	funded amount	\$20,000
2013 Signs Project	funded amount	\$5,386
2014 Bainbridge Island Visitor Information Center:	funded amount	\$26,822
2015 Bainbridge Island Visitor Information Center:	funded amount	\$34,817
2016 Bainbridge Island Visitor Information Center:	funded amount	\$56,426
2017 Bainbridge Island Visitor Information Center:	funded amount	\$56,000

4. Unfunded/incomplete projects

None.

Project Information

A. Describe the proposed project.

The proposed program/project is the Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce Visitor Information Center and the Bainbridge Island Visitors Bureau. This incorporates all aspects of advertising, marketing, website management, social media, event promotion, community promotion, and operation of tourism facilities.

As part of our mission the Visitor Information Center's first objective is to greet and inform visitors/tourists of the current events and attractions they will find on the island to enhance their visit and make their stay on the island a memorable experience.

The initial task of greeting is done at the kiosk located at the ferry terminal and in the main office of the Chamber on Winslow Way. Well-trained, knowledgeable staff and volunteers are critical to the delivery of consistent and reliable visitor information and customer service. The Chamber is committed to staffing the ferry kiosk with a core of paid staff supported by volunteers. Under the supervision of experienced chamber personnel, the main chamber offices on Winslow Way are staffed with enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteers dedicated to providing visitors with the same reliable visitor information and quality customer service as is found at the kiosk.

Another key component of the mission is to "Promote the Community" using advertising, marketing and communication to both visitors and agencies that promote tourism on the Seattle side of the water as well as those who come to visit us from around the world.

To this end it is necessary to maintain:

- Membership in Visit Seattle (SCVB)
- Membership in the Washington State Tourism Alliance
- Membership in the North Kitsap Tourism Consortium
- Maintaining contact with the Cruise Ship Information Staff
- Maintaining contact with the Concierges of the hotels in Seattle
- Maintaining contact with Convention and Meeting planners in Seattle

A significant part of the mission to "Promote the Community" is to continue to provide an exceptional web presence. The majority of our visitors/tourists find us on Google, Yahoo, Bing, Opera and others. The Chamber has determined through Google Analytics that this past year our web information is as follows for Visit Bainbridge.com and Grand Old 4th.com:

Sessions	191,996 up 52% over 2016
Users	162,166 up 53% over 2016
Pageviews	517,111 up 55% over 2016

This points to the fact that most of our visitors are accessing information through digital media. Keeping our website information current and relevant is of utmost importance. These sites provide information for our visitors/guests on topics such as lodging, dining, shopping, recreational activities, culture, history, relocation information and much more. Therefore, several of our projects and social media marketing programs contain an element of extensive staff time, website maintenance and information updating.

B. Proposed Service(s)

1. The Bainbridge Island Visitors Bureau.

As outlined in our 2017 proposal, The Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce and the Bainbridge Island Downtown Association have hired a part time representative to bring visitors to the island during the off-peak months – November through April. Chris Mueller, a seasoned hospitality and Destination Marketing professional, was hired in June, has completed her training and is currently presenting Bainbridge Island to various visitor segments, including individual travelers, conventions, Seattle/King County Concierges, conferences, sports, LGBT and social, military,

educational, religious and fraternal groups. Through her efforts, many contacts have been made and an initial familiarization tour with the Visit Seattle team was held in August. Another familiarization tour with Seattle/King County hotel and condominium Concierges is scheduled for October 26.

Cost of Operation	Including: staffing, marketing materials and mailing Expense to be divided between BICC and BIDA	\$36,000.00	
		<u>Total Cost</u>	<u>Chamber Cost</u>
Staffing	1-part time employee -24hrs/wk. @ \$15.00/hr. for 50 weeks (no benefits)	\$29,000.00	\$14,500.00
	Promotional and Marketing materials	\$ 2,500.00	\$1,250.00
	Event representation	\$ 3,000.00	\$1,500.00
	Event Promotion	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 500.00
	Miscellaneous office Supplies	\$ 500.00	\$ 250.00

In 2018 there are 69 conventions planned with an attendee count of 164,165 plus spouses or guests. We currently have information on conventions planned as many as five years in the future. The first year for Visit Bainbridge has been a building year, but in upcoming years we will be able to monitor attendance with special offers and marketing materials.

2. Tourism Marketing and Promotion

An important part of the marketing of Bainbridge Island are the brochures we prepare in house to provide tourists/visitors with information as to the current places to stay, dine, shop, taste wine, recreate and most importantly where the bathrooms are (copies of the current brochures are attached to this proposal). A new brochure based on activity level is the "Lynwood Center" is now available. The brochures we produce are done on an as needed basis and contain the latest information with regards to each of the previously listed categories. The printing as we have said is in house, less expensive than using a printing company and the information is current. The costs for this segment of the program are:

Printing, paper cost, copy machine lease, staff time8,000 copies	\$6,000.00
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3. Celebrate Bainbridge

Started in 2016 as a partnership of the Chamber, Downtown Association, Rotary Club of Bainbridge Island, Bainbridge Island Youth Services and the City of Bainbridge, Celebrate Bainbridge is a program designed to highlight the activities of the Auction, the Street Dance, the Fun Run Race and the Grand Old 4th in one advertising campaign. This will be the second year and the plan to highlight the period from the 1st to the 4th will again be packaged in the "Celebrate Bainbridge" campaign. The website is used as well as print material, street signs and posters and advertising blitz through social media.

Marketing material, advertising, posters, staff time	\$7,500.00
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4. Visit Seattle

Visit Seattle (formerly the Seattle Convention and Visitors Bureau) membership in which we receive invaluable information regarding tourism in the region. We also receive referrals from their offices and work with their staff to promote the island. We receive the lists of conventions coming to the region and this allows us to contact the convention conveners. Statistical information as to the impact of tourism in the region gives us insight into which direction our marketing efforts would best be suited.

Membership in Visit Seattle	\$500.
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5. Washington Tourism Alliance

Several years ago the State of Washington eliminated its State Department of Tourism. The industry took it upon itself to look for private funding sources and encourage membership among businesses, chambers and CVB's. This self-supported organization is the Washington Tourism Alliance.

Membership in WTA, Webinars. Tours Visits, etc.	\$1,000.00
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6. Website Development and Maintenance

Over the last couple of years, the Chamber's websites have become the most dominant and dynamic tool used to market the island. Visitors/tourists have moved with the technology and we now find that a majority of our website page views are from mobile devices. Three years ago the Chamber created a micro site for the Grand Old Fourth of July. This shows us the power of our website and prompted the Chamber to create a micro site for "Visitor Information". This site visitbainbridge.com contains all the pertinent information for visitors/tourists. Where to stay, shop, dine etc. Based on the traffic received on the Grand Old Fourth Site, we anticipate the Visitor site will garner very high traffic levels as well. The traffic levels also become a base line for reporting of visitor inquiries as required by the State. The following are the costs involved in the URL/Server registration, maintenance and monthly upkeep of the Visitor Information site:

Maintenance of web site	\$250/ quarter	\$1,000.00
Registration, updating of URL/server, information, (visitbainbridge.com)		\$500.00
Registration, updating of URL/server, information, (Grandold4th.com)		\$500.00
Staff time to maintain information 4 hours per week for 50 weeks	\$19.00/ hr.	\$3,800.00

7. The Grand Old Fourth of July

The Grand Old Fourth of July is the largest community event on Bainbridge Island. In 2018 the Chamber will celebrate 51 years of hosting this event. Estimates put attendance at between 25,000 and 35,000 people depending on the weather. This event is consistently named the Best Event by the Review.

Featuring a Street Fair, a mile-long Parade, Classic Car Show, Beer and Wine Garden, food, Young Artisans Fair, children's activities and entertainment the Grand Old Fourth is a day-long adventure. Over the years this event has become a homecoming for many of our former residents, and a welcoming for those who have chosen to make this their new home. The draw for this event is from people from all over Washington State, the United States and into Canada. This past year our Grand Old Fourth was featured in a British travel magazine as one of the top five best places to experience the Fourth of July in the United States. The Website designed for this event, <http://www.grandold4th.com>, is extremely well visited each year. The majority of visitors/tourists and local residents used this to find the information they needed. Schedule of events, locations of activities, parking, to the extent that our volunteers at the chamber office noted fewer numbers of phone calls in comparison to previous years. We continue to use this microsite to provide all the needed information for this event.

Planning, coordinating, marketing, staffing and volunteers all contribute to the success of this event. As was pointed out earlier this website is up 55% over 2016 showing how much more people rely on digital media to provide information.

Marketing materials, event planning, administration/ supervision, operations, hourly staffing costs, maintenance, meetings,	\$12,000.00
Website upkeep, maintenance and ongoing management	\$1,000.00
Proposed auxiliary staffing	\$500.00

(Volunteer hours during this event 1,000 hours @ \$9.47/hr. - valued at \$9,470.00)

8. Operating/Staffing tourism promotion facilities.

The Chamber operates two facilities to meet and greet our visitors/tourists. The main Chamber office on Winslow way is open six days a week, fifty weeks a year. The Chamber also operates the Kiosk at the ferry terminal. This is open seven days a week during the main tourist season from May 1 to September 30. It is opened on weekends during the latter part of the spring shoulder season and the beginning part of the shoulder season in the fall. Under the supervision of experienced chamber personnel, the chamber visitor centers are manned by enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff and volunteers dedicated to providing visitors/tourists with reliable information that is current, relevant and informative. Costs to maintain supervision and staffing are as follows:

Supervision hours:		Shoulder Season	24 wks. @ 2 hrs./wk. @ \$19.00/hr. =	\$912.00
		High Season	26 wks. @ 4 hrs./wk. @ \$19.00/hr. =	\$1,976.00
Staffing hours:	Chamber Office:	Shoulder Season	24 wks. @ 6 hrs./wk. @ \$15.00/hr. =	\$2,160.00
		High Season	26 wks. @ 6 hrs./wk. @ \$15.00/hr. =	\$2,340.00
	Kiosk:	Shoulder Season	24 wks. @ 20 hrs./wk. @ \$15.00/hr. =	\$7,200.00
		High Season	26 wks. @ 25 hrs./wk. @ \$15.00/hr. =	\$9,750.00
In-kind Volunteer hours:	Chamber office/kiosk:	2,500 hours @ \$9.47/hr. = \$23,675.00		

9. Operation of a tourism related facility.

The Chamber operates two facilities for the welcoming of visitors and the distribution of related materials from both the Chamber and all of our partners. The Kiosk at the ferry terminal is leased from Kitsap Transit and has no operations costs. The Kiosk was renovated several years ago and given a fresh coat of paint.

The Main Chamber visitor information area at 395 Winslow Way uses 250 square feet of space out of a total of 2900 square feet. Proportionate costs for the facility would be 12% of total operating costs as outlined below:

Rent:	\$37,387.60	12%	\$4,486.51
Electrical:	\$3,175.00	12%	\$381.00
Phone/Int./Email:	\$4,785.00	12%	\$574.20
Refuse:	\$177.00	12%	\$21.24
<u>Insurance:</u>	<u>\$4,250.50</u>	12%	<u>\$510.06</u>
Totals	\$49,774.60	12%	\$5,973.01

A - Expected impact in increased tourism in 2017

In 2017, to the end of September, we have seen an increase of 20 % in the number of visitors/tourists we greeted and counted at both the Kiosk at the ferry terminal and in our office on Winslow Way. Our visitors/tourists come from all 50 States, all Provinces of Canada and over 40 countries from around the world. Visit Seattle has indicated in its 2017-2018 report there will be 38.9 Million visitors coming to the region a 2.2% increase over 2016. One in 18 jobs created in the region comes from tourism. There will be 218 cruise ship sailings in 2017. The biggest challenge for Seattle right now is the need for more hotel rooms. There are ten new hotels with over 3,000 rooms scheduled to be built in Seattle over the next 3 years. Tourism in this region will have a steady growth for the next several years, and Bainbridge by association will reap the benefits of that growth.

B - Expected impact on or increase in overnight stays on the island.

The Chamber, in partnership with the Downtown Association, the North Kitsap Tourism Coalition, the Lodging Association and the Bainbridge Island Parks Department is working on promoting or creating events or activities which will increase overnight stays on Bainbridge. Events such as the "Chilly Hilly", "Mocha Tsuki Celebration", "The Quilt Festival", "Spirits and Spirits" and the "Winter Wonderland" will happen during the shoulder season. During the high season, lodging on the island is at or near maximum capacity. We are working on additional events and activities in the off season to increase overnight stays. New programs planned with the Best Western Plus, Bainbridge Island will target those shoulder season times when traffic is lower.

C – Projected economic impact on Bainbridge island businesses.

According to the most recent numbers from Visit Seattle, tourism in the King County region, from which we benefit, \$7 Billion was spent by almost 20 million overnight visitors. 4.8 million of those visitors/tourists were International visitors/tourists. At the state level according to the Washington Tourism Alliance tourism is growing. \$20.7 Billion in annual visitor spending. \$1.8 Billion in state and local taxes collected. 170,500 jobs supporting \$6.4 Billion in earnings. 39.4 Million overnight visitors spending an average of \$214 per person per day. On the island, we anticipate a minimum of a 5% increase in visitors.

D – The project's potential to draw visitors to the island and increase overnight stays.

The Chamber works with groups on the island as well as the North Kitsap Tourism Coalition which will lead to the promotion of shoulder season events and helps to secure their success. The Chamber is working with groups such as the Quilt Guild to promote their fall Quilt display event, and working with the Japanese American Exclusion Memorial Committee on their Mocha Tsuki festival held in the first week of January. The North Kitsap Tourism Coalition is planning to expand its event "Spirits and Spirits" in October.

E – The applicant's demonstrated history of organizational and project success.

The Chamber of Commerce has been welcoming visitors/tourists to the Island for 90 years since 1927. Dedicated staff and volunteers who take pride in their island have demonstrated year after year the ability to provide accurate, up to date relevant information on behalf of the businesses and services on the island. Working with many organizations on the island, the Chamber has proven to be a willing partner. Keeping up to date with the latest technology and marketing trends including social media has demonstrated our ability to be current and relevant.

A more recent development is the introduction of BI Ride by Kitsap Transit. This is a direct result of the creation of the Froghopper by the Chamber in the 2013 LTAC funding cycle. The creation of The Grand Old Fourth web site is another example of a great success leading to the development of another program, the new VisitBainbridge.com web site.

F – Describe any partnerships with other organizations in the proposed project.

The Chamber is proud to have many partnerships with organizations on the island. The Bainbridge Downtown Association, the Rotary Club of Bainbridge Island, the Lodging Association and the Bainbridge Island Arts and Humanities Council are some of the largest groups. The Chamber actively distributes brochures and information for each of these

groups to the many visitors/tourists to the island. The Chamber is also pleased to partner with other organizations on the island such as Bloedel Reserve, Squeaky Wheels, KiDiMu, The Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, the Bainbridge Island History Museum, the Japanese American Exclusion Memorial, Kiwanis, the Farmers Market and many more.

G – Describe to what degree the project goals are measurable.

The Chamber has for many years counted and surveyed visitors/tourists at the Kiosk outside the ferry terminal and in our office on Winslow Way. These records go back to 1998. This gives us a sense of the traffic year over year. Using Google Analytics we analyze information on our website including; unique visitors, page views, time on line, mobile stats, Country of origin, exit pages, and many other statistics to help us to determine where our information is going and who is using it. We can adjust or augment the information we provide based on the analytics received. With the creation of the Bainbridge Island Visitor Bureau, we will be able to track attendance from information sent to convention goers. Using special offers and other promotional programs we can track the attendance at events.

H – Describe the degree to which the project will leverage award funds with additional matching funds.

Many of the events or services we listed have a component of volunteer hours or in-kind donations. The Chamber would not be able to do any of these events or offer the services without the help of a very large corps of volunteers. The volunteers who man the phones and greet the visitors/tourists who come to the Chamber office are the backbone of the VIC. These volunteers give countless hours at the Chamber office, the kiosk the Grand Old Fourth and other special projects throughout the year. During the course of the year our volunteers contribute almost 4,000 hours of their time which equates to almost \$40,000.

Supporting Documentation

1. Timeline.

The Time line for this project is January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018
Specific dates such as the 4th of July are noted in the individual listings.

2. Budget

The budget is attached containing each individual listing and its related costs.

3. Scalability

Project scalability is determined by the projects and their make-up. It stands to reason that a membership in an organization cannot be scaled back. You either belong or you do not. The cost of participating in an event is determined by booth costs and other event related costs. You either pay for the booth or you do not attend. Scaling back for the Grand Old Fourth of July would result in some services not being provided. The cost of maintenance of a website could mean that information is not current and would lead to inaccurate or out of date information. Areas that could be scaled back would include staff hours, the management of the staffing and the printing of tourism related materials.

4. Financial statements are provided following this section.

5. Budget estimates are included in the financial statements.

6. Letters of support are attached

	Budget for 2018 LTAC Proposal		
	Item	Price	Totals
1	Bainbridge Island Visitors Bureau		
	Staffing (50% of costs, shared with BIDA)	\$14,500.00	
	Marketing materials (50% of costs shared with BIDA)	\$1,250.00	
	Event Representation (50% of costs shared with BIDA)	\$1,500.00	
	Mailing (50% of costs shared with BIDA)	\$500.00	
	Miscellaneous Office Supplies (50% of costs shared with BIDA)	\$250.00	\$18,000.00
2	Tourism marketing and promotion		
	Printing, paper costs, machine lease, staff time		\$6,000.00
3	Celebrate Bainbridge		
	Marketing, advertising, posters, staff time		\$7,500.00
4	Visit Seattle		
	Membership		\$500.00
5	Washington Tourism Alliance		
	Membership, Webinars, tours, visits		\$1,000.00
6	Website Development and Maintenance		
	Maintenance of Website (\$250 per qtr.)	\$2,000.00	
	Staff time to maintain information	\$3,800.00	\$5,800.00
7	Grand Old Fourth of July (51th Anniversary)		
	Marketing, event planning, operations, staff costs, materials	\$12,000.00	
	Website maintenance,	\$1,000.00	
	Proposed auxiliary staffing	\$500.00	\$13,500.00
8	Operating a tourism related facility-staffing		
	Supervisory hours	\$2,888.00	
	Staffing Hours	\$21,450.00	\$24,338.00
9	Operation costs of a tourism related facility		
	Total operations costs \$49774.60 @ 12%		\$5,973.01
			\$82,611.01

Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce Financial Statement					
				2017	
	Item	2016	2016	Actual to	2017
		Actual	Budget	7/31/2017	Budget
	Chamber of Commerce	\$318,983	\$ 307,755	\$ 209,349	\$ 300,948
	Department of Licensing	\$102,989	\$ 102,750	\$ 67,500	\$ 107,000
		\$421,972	\$ 410,505	\$ 276,849	\$ 407,948
	Grand Old Fourth	\$36,165	\$ 39,240	\$ 39,484	\$ 38,109
	Directory	\$4,400	\$ 4,000	\$ 22,245	\$ 28,230
	Installation Dinner	\$6,700	\$ 8,500	\$ 7,500	\$ 7,000
	Membership	\$116,914	\$ 119,400	\$ 59,729	\$ 115,550
	Other events	\$257,793	\$ 239,365	\$ 147,891	\$ 219,059
	Total Income	\$421,972	\$ 410,505	\$ 276,849	\$ 407,948
	Cost of Goods	\$56,648	\$ 60,720	\$ 43,043	\$ 58,486
	Gross Profit	\$365,324	\$ 349,785	\$ 232,802	\$ 349,652
	Expenses				
	Chamber of Commerce	\$253,081	\$ 196,780	\$ 159,262	\$ 197,000
	Department of Licensing	\$61,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 45,920	\$ 75,000
	Lease Expense	\$27,000	\$ 27,000	\$ 20,693	\$ 36,387
	Office Expense	\$10,735	\$ 9,280	\$ 6,265	\$ 10,602
	Payroll Expense	\$244,548	\$ 221,967	\$ 142,439	\$ 222,866
	Insurance Expense	\$7,987	\$ 9,830	\$ 4,973	\$ 7,094
	Other Expense	\$47,421	\$ 44,090	\$ 30,812	\$ 63,165
	Total Expense	\$337,691	\$ 312,167	\$ 205,182	\$ 340,114
	Net income (Expense)	\$27,298	\$ 37,167	\$ 27,620	\$ 9,347



Board of Directors
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Staff

Jerri Lane, CDME
Executive Director

Cindy Vandersluis
Program Manager

August 9, 2017

To: 2018 Lodging Tax Advisory Committee

From: Jerri Lane, Executive Director, Bainbridge Island Downtown Association

Re: Letter of support for Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce Visitor Information Services/Lodging Tax Proposal

I would like to offer our support for the Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce's 2018 Lodging Tax proposal to fund a variety of visitor information services, destination marketing initiatives and visitor support.

The Chamber's two visitor information centers, located at the Bainbridge Island Ferry Terminal and inside the Chamber's main office on Winslow Way, serve as primary distribution sources for maps, guides and general visitor information for many of the Island's visitors. Both locations distribute the Downtown Association's annual *Downtown Walkabout Guide* as the primary pedestrian map for our downtown Bainbridge retail, attractions and recreational area. The Chamber's support for the *Walkabout Guide* helps make the guide the most frequently used visitor collateral on the Island.

The partnership of the Chamber and the Downtown Association has led to the creation of Visit Bainbridge, and the hiring of a Director of Visitor Development. That person's primary goals include introducing Bainbridge Island to visitor decision makers and encouraging traffic during off peak periods – November – April.

We are supportive of the wide range of visitor outreach under development at the Chamber, including branding, special events and an enhanced visitor focused website offering an island wide booking engine.

We encourage the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee to consider the value that the Chamber's Visitor Information Services and Visit Bainbridge initiative will provide and their role in ensuring an enhanced visitor experience.

With best regards,
Jerri Lane Executive Director
Bainbridge Island Downtown Association

September 6th, 2017

North Kitsap Tourism Coalition
4839 NE View Drive Suite G
Port Gamble, WA 98346

Dear Members of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee,

The North Kitsap Tourism Coalition strongly supports the Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce in their request for Lodging Tax funds. Bainbridge Island is one of the main gateways to the entire Kitsap Peninsula with exposure to millions of visitors per year. The Chamber staffs two visitor centers and greets visitors at the ferry terminal and the main information center. They have been promoting tourism on Bainbridge Island since 1927.

The Chamber markets local tourism and events online at several websites including BainbridgeChamber.com, VisitBainbridge.com and GrandOld4th.com. We are currently a partner with the Chamber on our website and we link to these websites in promotion of the events.

Bainbridge Island is an important destination under the "Washington's Sanctuary Shore" umbrella as it offers restaurants, shopping, arts and culture and attractions such as the Bloedel Reserve, BI Museum of Art, and the Japanese American Exclusion Memorial. We are pleased to offer another avenue to market Bainbridge Island and are proud to have a representative from the Chamber as an officer and Board member of the North Kitsap Tourism Coalition.

Thank you for your consideration.

Pete Orbea



President

North Kitsap Tourism Coalition



**NORTH KITSAP
PENINSULA**

Washington's Sanctuary Shore



**Rotary Club of Bainbridge Island
PO Box 11286, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110**

August 9, 2017

To Whom it May Concern,

Last July 1-4 the Rotary Club of Bainbridge Island, the Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce, Bainbridge Island Youth Service and The Downtown Association, had a very successful run at the second year of "Celebrate Bainbridge ". The Rotary Auction led the kick off and combined its advertising dollars with the other partners to present 4 days of events around the Fourth of July festivities all over the island. Somewhere around July 21st there was a wrap up meeting with the sponsors and Chief Matt Hamner and it was determined a success.

As the Rotary Auction Chair for 2018, I look forward to working with the Chamber of Commerce and its partners for another successful "Celebrate Bainbridge" year. We pledge our efforts in making this a successful event.

Phil Toohey
Rotary Auction Chair

**Rotary Club of Bainbridge Island
Charter No. 6732 P.O. Box 11286 Bainbridge Island, WA 98110**



Lodging Tax Advisory Committee
City of Bainbridge Island
280 Madison Ave.
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

August 9, 2017

Dear Advisory Committee Members,

Please allow this letter to serve as support of the Chamber of Commerce's LTAC proposal for 2018. As a member and leader in the business community, I believe strongly in the Chamber's efforts to promote Bainbridge Island.

Your support of the Chamber through LTAC funding is an investment that pays great benefits to the business community. Creation of traditions such as the Grand Old 4th and Oktoberfest, promote opportunity for visitors to enjoy our community and create memories. The access of information through digital media is invaluable to the business community. We often use links to the Chamber websites when helping new clients move to Bainbridge Island or help our clients obtain information about various activities.

In closing I would like to thank you for consideration of this request and express appreciation for your time in serving on the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Linda Lincoln", written over the printed name.

Linda Lincoln
Vice President/Manager

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

921 Hildebrand Lane NE Suite 100
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Direct : 206 842 6929
Direct : 855 340 8752
www.homestreet.com





City of Bainbridge Island
Lodging Tax Advisory Committee
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

August 9, 2017

Dear Committee Member:

Bainbridge Youth Services (BYS) is proud to support the Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce ("the Chamber") and their request for an LTAC grant.

Building strong and vibrant communities, developing partnerships with all businesses, and making our island a great place to live and visit is what the Chamber does best.

Our nonprofit, which serves youth through free and confidential one to one counseling, tutoring and career services, has benefited greatly from our Chamber's collaboration and leadership. We have partnered on a variety of projects, from Celebrate Bainbridge and the 4th of July Fun Run to our 6 week Summer Internship program.

We work directly with Rex Oliver, the Chamber's Executive, to plan each year's 4th of July events as well as prepare an intern to work at the Chamber office from July to end of August, while also working side by side at the Rotary Auction and Rummage Sale. It's an incredibly busy time and the Chamber makes time for it all...because it's all important.

The visibility the Chamber creates for our island events, from the July 3rd Dance and Rotary Auction, to the BYS Fun Run is amazing. All efforts are to help partnering organizations. All efforts work to generate amazing traffic for our events. This year's 4th of July Fun Run had 1,085 runners, which is the greatest number of participants in 38 years. We could not achieve this type of growth without the Chamber helping generate exposure to our event.

The Chamber also bestows honors on island businesses and leaders through their Annual Awards ceremony. This recognition is important for our island culture. Businesses and individuals are acknowledged for their outstanding works in our community.

They are a big part of our island fabric. Thanks to the Chamber, Bainbridge Island is a sought after destination.

Sincerely,


Marina Cofer-Wildsmith, Executive Director



P.O. Box 11173 • Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 • (206) 842-9675
www.bainbridgeyouthservices.org





2017 Lodging Tax Advisory Committee

Re: Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce

BIHM Board of Directors

Joan Walters, President

Tom Lamping, Vice President

Charlie Averill, Treasurer

Kathleen Bullivant, Secretary

Karen Beierle

Bill Covert

Carolyn Hart

James McNett

Per Sherwin

Dennis Tierney

David C. Williams

Dear Committee Members,

The Bainbridge Island Historical Museum is pleased to support the Chamber's grant request for Lodging Tax funds for 2017.

The Chamber's kiosk at the ferry terminal provides ferry visitors their first exposure to the many opportunities for learning about the island.

Visitors can view maps and learn how to "get around" as well as obtain brochures and flyers to learn about the many opportunities to enjoy a visit. The museum provides some of the items which are distributed through the kiosk as well as at their office in Winslow

The museum is appreciative of the relationship between our two organizations and the synergies built up over many years.

We encourage your support of their proposal.

Respectfully,

Hemy R. Helm Executive Director
Bainbridge Island Historical Museum

Hank Helm
Executive Director

A Washington Tourism Alliance membership supports the effort to create a statewide tourism marketing organization. Tourism is Washington's 4th largest industry. It produces 20.7 billion dollars and supports over 170,000 jobs in our state annually. Unfortunately, as neighboring states and provinces spend more and more money to entice visitors to their destinations, Washington is beginning to lose market share in the tourism industry. Oregon and Montana spend over \$20 million a year to attract tourists and British Columbia spends \$50 million. Last year the WTA budget was under \$500,000.

In 2017, the Washington Tourism Alliance will introduce legislation that will create a fully-funded statewide tourism organization which will help create jobs and spur economic growth throughout Washington State. Throughout the Fall of 2016 and into 2017, the Washington Tourism Alliance will be leading a grassroots effort to build awareness and support for our legislative plan. Your membership helps support this effort.

Your membership also gives your organization discounts when advertising in the Official Washington Visitors' Guide and on the ExperienceWA.com website and grants you preferred rates when attending WTA events. We hope you join us on October 14th at the Crowne Plaza in SeaTac for our annual tourism summit. We sincerely appreciate your support of the WTA. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Mike Moe

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mike@watourismalliance.com

Experiencewa.com

